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Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*

Tajikistan

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Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, held its twenty-fifth session from 2 to 13 May 2016. The review of Tajikistan was held at the 9th meeting on 6 May 2016. The delegation of Tajikistan was headed by the Minister of Justice of Tajikistan, Rustam Shohmurod. At its 17th meeting, held on 11 May 2016, the Working Group adopted the report on Tajikistan.

2. On 12 January 2016, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Tajikistan: Algeria, Germany and Saudi Arabia.

3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 and paragraph 5 of the annex to Council resolution 16/21, the following documents were issued for the review of Tajikistan:

(a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/25/TJK/1);

(b) A compilation prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in accordance with paragraph 15 (b) (A/HRC/WG.6/25/TJK/2);

(c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/25/TJK/3).

4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Belgium, Chile, the Czech Republic, Germany, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Norway, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America was transmitted to Tajikistan through the troika. These questions are available on the extranet of the universal periodic review.

I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

A. Presentation by the State under review

5. Tajikistan considered the universal periodic review to be an important mechanism for international oversight over Member States' fulfilment of their international human rights obligations and for assessing positive developments and challenges in a given country. Since gaining its independence, Tajikistan had been committed to building a democratic society based on human rights values. That commitment was reflected in the second chapter of the Constitution, which guaranteed human rights and fundamental freedoms in line with the core international human rights instruments.

6. During the reporting period, Tajikistan had submitted periodic reports to six treaty bodies and had received visits from the Special Rapporteur on disability of the Commission for Social Development, the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation. The Government had thoroughly reviewed all the recommendations issued by those human rights mechanisms, in close cooperation with representatives of civil society. Various national action plans had been developed for their implementation.

7. The main priorities of the Government in the area of economic and social development remained ensuring social and political stability, economic prosperity and the social well-being of the people. The poverty reduction strategy for 2010-2013 and the strategy to improve the well-being of the population for 2013-2015 had been implemented within the framework of the national development strategy for the period up to 2015. Subsequently, a decline in the poverty rate had been observed. The drafting of a new national development strategy, covering the period up to 2030, had begun.

8. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the period 2016-2020 had been approved by the Government and the United Nations, in order to help Tajikistan face its development challenges. The Framework covered the following main areas: democratic governance, the rule of law and human rights, sustainable and equitable economic development, social development, inclusion and empowerment and resilience and environmental sustainability.

9. The 2013-2015 national plan to implement the recommendations made by United Nations Member States in connection with the first review of Tajikistan had been approved pursuant to a presidential decision adopted in April 2013. The national plan had been developed in cooperation with civil society and international organizations. Several measures to bring legislation and practice into conformity with the State's international human rights commitments had been taken in the framework of the plan.

10. Tajikistan had been implementing a policy of zero tolerance with respect to torture. The definition of torture in the Criminal Code had been brought into line with article 1 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Several other legal and policy measures had been taken to implement the recommendations from the first review to combat torture. The law on the suspension of the death penalty had come into force and a moratorium on the death penalty had been imposed. Amendments to the Criminal Code had introduced a maximum limit of 20 years for prison sentences. The transition to the abolition of the death penalty would take place gradually and would involve addressing issues of an administrative, financial and legal nature.

11. The Constitution guaranteed the independence of the judiciary. The 2015-2017 judicial reform programme, which constituted the third stage of reforms, aimed to strengthen the judiciary and increase the role of courts in protecting human rights and freedoms and the interest of the State and in ensuring the rule of law and access to justice. As part of the judicial reform process, an adversarial system had been introduced.

12. Tajikistan had adopted a new law on advocacy and the Bar, which regulated the mandate, rights and responsibilities of lawyers, the issuance of licences to practice law, the entry to the legal profession and disbarment. The law established a qualification commission under the auspices of the Ministry of Justice, consisting of nine members from various bodies, including the Bar. The Government had adopted a concept document on legal aid in close cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme. A new law on legal aid was to be adopted on the basis of the outcome of the project to pilot the new legal aid model.

13. Amendments to the law on the Commissioner for Human Rights had been adopted in March 2016 to ensure the independence and improve the effectiveness of the work of the Commissioner. The new amendments provided for the involvement of the Commissioner in the process of ratifying new human rights treaties. In addition to visiting penitentiary institutions, the Commissioner had been granted a broad mandate to visit all places where people were deprived of their liberty. Moreover, the amendments to the law had introduced a new section on the establishment of an ombudsman on the rights of the child.

14. The Constitution guaranteed the freedom of expression and of the mass media and prohibited State censorship. In 2012, the articles on defamation and insult had been removed from the Criminal Code, and liability had been established for those acts under the Civil Code. The 2013 law on mass media simplified the procedure for registering media outlets. The delegation reported on the number of private and public print and electronic media and radio stations operating in the country. The law provided for certain restrictions on the freedom of the press, which were in conformity with international human rights standards.

15. The law on the prevention of domestic violence had been adopted in 2013. It envisaged the provision of assistance to victims of domestic violence. There were 18 crisis centres operating the county. The post of inspector to combat domestic violence had been created within the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The Government had also adopted a domestic violence prevention programme for 2014-2023. In 2014, Tajikistan had ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

16. The 2010-2015 national action plan for juvenile justice reform had been implemented, and new plan was being developed for 2017-2021. A juvenile justice department had been established within the Ministry of Justice in order to implement recommendations from the first universal periodic review to protect the rights and interests of juveniles.

17. The Constitution guaranteed everyone the right to freely choose and manifest his or her religion or belief. Over four thousand religious organizations existed in Tajikistan. The Constitution gave every citizen the right to freedom of association. Over two thousand public associations were registered. The law on public associations had been amended to ensure transparency in the financing of public associations. The amended law required public associations to report on funding received from foreign sources. The reporting had a declaratory nature and did not entail any restrictions on funding from foreign sources.

18. The delegation reported on measures taken to combat trafficking in persons and corruption. A comprehensive programme to combat trafficking in persons for 2014-2016 had been implemented. The act on combating trafficking in persons and providing assistance to victims had been adopted in 2014. An anti-corruption law and strategy had been adopted and an anti-corruption advisory council had been established.

19. Tajikistan was committed to guaranteeing international and regional security, including by combating terrorism, extremism, illicit traffic in narcotics and organized and economic crime. In that respect, Tajikistan had acceded to several international and regional instruments and adopted a number of laws. In September 2015, Tajikistan had witnessed an act of terrorism and extremism that had been orchestrated by the former deputy Minister of Defence, with the financial support of the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan, and that had claimed dozens of lives. The Supreme Court had declared that party to be a terrorist and extremist organization and had suspended its activity. The suspension had been carried out in accordance with international instruments on combating terrorism and extremism.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

20. During the interactive dialogue, 71 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue are to be found in section II of the present report.

21. India encouraged Tajikistan to consider issuing a standing invitation to special procedure mandate holders, to combat stereotypes relating to the role of women, to reduce

the gender pay gap and to address the issue of domestic violence. It enquired about the reform of the committee for women and family affairs.

22. Indonesia praised the development of various national action plans to implement the recommendations of the United Nations human rights mechanisms. It noted the adoption of the act on combating trafficking in persons and providing assistance to victims and the national inclusive education policy for children with special needs.

23. The Islamic Republic of Iran noted with satisfaction the steps taken by Tajikistan to establish an office on the rights of children and to transform the office on human rights guarantees into a department under the auspices of the Executive Office of the President.

24. Iraq commended Tajikistan on the measures taken to protect women and children from violence and its efforts to implement a development programme.

25. Italy commended the measures taken by Tajikistan to prevent the use of torture. It welcomed the implementation of awareness-raising campaigns on the abolition of the death penalty and the adoption of a law and a programme on preventing domestic violence.

26. Japan commended Tajikistan for accepting visits by several special rapporteurs. Japan was concerned about restrictions imposed on access to websites and social networks. It was also concerned at reports that insufficient measures had been taken to promote the rights of persons with disabilities.

27. Kazakhstan noted the active engagement of Tajikistan with the United Nations human rights mechanisms. It noted with appreciation the adoption of a number of laws that aimed to bring the national legislation into line with international human rights standards.

28. Kuwait noted that the Government had adopted various human rights action plans, implemented legislative and judicial reforms and taken steps to prevent human trafficking. Kuwait noted with appreciation the efforts of Tajikistan to promote the rights of the child and commended the improvements made to the penitentiary system.

29. Kyrgyzstan noted with appreciation the efforts of Tajikistan to strengthen the legal and institutional framework for the protection of human rights, expand the mandate of the Commissioner for Human Rights and continue its active cooperation with the United Nations human rights mechanisms.

30. The Lao People's Democratic Republic noted with appreciation the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. It welcomed efforts to implement the recommendations from the universal periodic review and the treaty bodies.

31. Latvia noted the concerns expressed by various treaty bodies regarding the limited representation of women in decision-making positions. It also noted the concerns expressed by the Human Rights Committee about undue restrictions on freedom of expression and inquired about measures taken by Tajikistan to address those concerns.

32. Lithuania commended Tajikistan for its cooperation with OHCHR. It welcomed the moratorium on the death penalty and the adoption of a law on domestic violence and its related programme for 2014-2023.

33. Malaysia noted the steps taken to improve the independence of the justice system through judicial reform, to combat trafficking in persons and to provide human rights education and training for the public and for State officials.

34. Maldives welcomed the establishment of an office on the rights of the child within the Executive Office of the President and the adoption of the human rights education

programme and the inclusive education policy. It urged Tajikistan to guarantee an adequate standard of living and address the needs of the poor and the marginalized.

35. Mexico noted with appreciation the cooperation of Tajikistan with the special procedure mandate holders and the adoption of various national action plans to implement the State's human rights obligations.

36. Morocco praised the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It acknowledged the measures taken to protect migrant workers, to strengthen the judiciary and to combat trafficking in persons.

37. Nepal noted the moratorium on the application of the death penalty and the initiatives aimed at its complete abolition. Nepal referred to the intention of Tajikistan to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. It noted the measures taken to empower women, promote gender equality and combat domestic violence.

38. The Netherlands was concerned that the freedom of the press was being undermined and that critical sources of information were inaccessible to citizens. While welcoming the withdrawal of mandatory HIV testing for foreigners, it noted that HIV prevalence had increased and that the stigmatization of and discrimination against sufferers remained major obstacles to an effective HIV/AIDS response.

39. The Niger praised the ratification of various international human rights treaties and the State's successful cooperation with international human rights mechanisms. It commended the various national action plans adopted to implement the recommendations of the treaty bodies.

40. Norway noted with concern the crackdown on opposition parties and groups and the situation relating to women's rights, domestic violence and detainees. It noted that arrests of and allegations against lawyers indicated shortcomings within the judiciary.

41. Pakistan welcomed the measures taken by Tajikistan to incorporate international instruments into domestic law, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It noted the efforts of Tajikistan to combat human trafficking and illicit traffic in narcotic drugs, to empower women, to protect the rights of children and persons with disabilities, to eradicate poverty and to maintain religious harmony.

42. Paraguay noted the adoption of a law and a programme on combating domestic violence. It asked about the measures taken by Tajikistan to promote the participation of women in public and political life.

43. The Philippines welcomed the 2013-2015 national plan to implement the recommendations of the first review. It appreciated the efforts of Tajikistan to involve inter-agency groups and civil society in preparing national plans to promote the rights of migrant workers, prevent torture and eliminate racial discrimination. The Philippines urged Tajikistan to continue to address the issue of access to quality health and educational services for all.

44. Poland commended Tajikistan for ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It remained concerned about the deteriorating situation with regard to human rights and respect for fundamental freedoms.

45. Portugal welcomed the State's ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Portugal

also welcomed the moratorium on the death penalty introduced in 2004 and the establishment of a national human rights institution.

46. The Republic of Korea noted the progress made by the State, since its review, in areas such as preventing torture and domestic violence, combating human trafficking, eradicating child labour and reducing poverty.

47. The Russian Federation noted with appreciation visits to the country by the Special Rapporteur on the right to health, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation and the Special Rapporteur on torture, as well as the submission of periodic reports to several treaty bodies. It welcomed the implementation of various programmes aimed at strengthening the democratization processes and protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens.

48. Senegal praised the efforts made by Tajikistan to implement the recommendations from its first review. It referred to the development of various national action plans and the cooperation of the Government with the special procedure mandate holders as positive steps towards strengthening the human rights system.

49. Sierra Leone commended the adoption of programmes and laws in the area of human rights and the moratorium on the death penalty. It urged Tajikistan to promote measures to combat deep-rooted stereotypes and gender segregation and to enforce the legal minimum age of marriage by ending the practice of underage religious marriages without civil marriage certificates.

50. Singapore welcomed the efforts of Tajikistan to provide equal opportunities to women and to promote tolerance by promoting inter-faith dialogue.

51. Slovakia stated that, despite the efforts of Tajikistan, the problems of torture and enforced disappearance persisted. Noting certain restrictions on the media, it encouraged the Government to respect the freedom of information and expression, including on the Internet.

52. Slovenia commended Tajikistan for the progress achieved since its review, including in fostering good governance and reducing poverty. It noted the State's cooperation with the United Nations human rights mechanisms. Slovenia expressed concern about cases of child marriage, widespread homophobia and discriminatory practices against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons.

53. Spain welcomed the adoption of the law on combating domestic violence and the moratorium on the death penalty.

54. The State of Palestine noted the various positive measures taken since the first review, including the adoption of a national action plan to implement the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. It also noted the adoption of various national plans and strategies on human rights.

55. Sweden stated that domestic violence was not included as a crime under the Criminal Code. Noting the State's acceptance of the recommendations from its first review to prohibit the corporal punishment of children, Sweden stated that more could be done to ensure the effective enforcement of that prohibition. The use of torture reportedly remained widespread within the criminal justice system.

56. Switzerland noted that some of the recommendations accepted by Tajikistan from the first review had yet to be implemented. While acknowledging efforts to prevent torture, it noted that the use of torture remained widespread. It commended the adoption of the act on the prevention of domestic violence and its related programme.

57. Togo noted that an office on the rights of the child had been established within the Executive Office of the President and that Tajikistan had developed eight action plans on human rights and ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

58. Turkey welcomed the reform of the judiciary, which aimed to enhance the role of the courts in defending human rights, and the adoption of new laws on procedures and conditions of arrest and detention and on the rights of detainees. Turkey commended the adoption of various national actions plans However, it stressed that such plans would only succeed if they were implemented in an appropriate and timely manner.

59. Turkmenistan noted with appreciation that Tajikistan had taken a number of measures to further develop its legislative and institutional framework to promote and protect human rights.

60. Ukraine acknowledged the adoption, following broad consultations with civil society, of several national actions plans on human rights. It commended the launch of the website on the human rights situation in Tajikistan, initiated with the support of OHCHR.

61. The United Arab Emirates welcomed the adoption of: national action plans to follow up on recommendations made by human rights mechanisms; measures to improve prison conditions; a programme to combat trafficking in persons; and the act on the prevention of domestic violence and its related programme.

62. The United Kingdom encouraged Tajikistan to take action on key recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and to ensure that the national development strategy included steps to promote the rights of citizens. It was concerned about restrictions on civil society organizations and on their funding, and called on Tajikistan to ensure that all legislation complied with international human rights standards.

63. The United States of America was concerned about: new legislation restricting the space for civil society; the increase in the number of politically motivated detentions and incarcerations of human rights defenders and opposition figures in the name of national security; and efforts to silence independent media.

64. Uruguay note with satisfaction the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. It encouraged Tajikistan to continue to cooperate with civil society on implementing the recommendations of the United Nations human rights mechanisms.

65. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela noted the progress made by Tajikistan since its first review, including in reducing poverty, through the implementation of its national development strategies, and in promoting access to primary education.

66. Algeria welcomed the State's cooperation with the United Nations human rights mechanisms; its consultations with civil society on the implementation of recommendations; and the measures taken to combat torture and trafficking in human beings, to prevent domestic violence and to tackle child labour.

67. The delegation of Tajikistan stated that the President of Tajikistan had sent a clear message on zero tolerance of torture. Legal measures had been taken to apply heavier penalties for the use of torture and to ensure that detainees were informed of their rights at the start of the deprivation of their liberty and had immediate access to a lawyer of their choice. A monitoring group, comprising representatives of State bodies and non-governmental organizations had been established to prevent cases of torture. In 2014 and

2015, the group had monitored 19 places of deprivation or restriction of liberty and several military units. The office of the Public Prosecutor had been carrying out regular inspections of prisons. The above-mentioned measures had resulted in a reduction in complaints regarding the use of torture.

68. Tajikistan had taken measures to strengthen its legislative and institutional framework to combat terrorism. The Government was engaged in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe programme on combating extremism and terrorism. Within the framework of that programme, the Government had developed a draft national strategy for the period 2016-2020, to prevent violent extremism and terrorism. The delegation emphasized that measures to tackle extremism and terrorism would be implemented in strict compliance with international human rights law.

69. Tajikistan had paid special attention to the promotion of the role of women in society and the prevention of domestic violence. The Government had implemented programmes that used mass media and awareness-raising campaigns to overcome stereotypes and patriarchal attitudes towards the role of women in society. Gender equality was integrated into development and socioeconomic strategies.

70. Although domestic legislation guaranteed gender equality, including in employment and education, a gender pay gap persisted. Women had been employed in low-paid jobs in areas such as education, health care and agriculture. The percentage of male employees had been greater in areas where wages were generally high. The Government had adopted a comprehensive programme to provide training and support to women to access well-paid jobs. Women had received microcredits. The number of microcredit recipients had been increasing each year. Women were represented in the civil service, local and regional government bodies and the national parliament.

71. The Government had been implementing programmes to increase the employment rate. Professional training and support was provided to women and young persons. The official unemployment rate had decreased over the previous five years. Women and persons with disabilities enjoyed stronger legal guarantees with regard to employment.

72. The Labour Code prohibited child labour. The Government had adopted a national programme to eliminate the worst forms of child labour. It had ratified the core United Nations conventions on migration issues, as well as bilateral agreements on labour migration. The Government had taken several measures to reintegrate into the labour market those migrant workers who had returned to Tajikistan.

73. Tajikistan had continued its reforms of the health system, which aimed to improve primary health care, based on a system of family doctors and the restructuring of hospitals. The Government had increased the budget funding for the health sector. The number of qualified medical personnel had increased. The maternal and infant mortality rates had decreased. The Government had been taking measures to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and had provided antiretroviral therapy. The prevalence of tuberculosis had decreased due to the efforts of the Government. Tajikistan had achieved polio-free status.

74. The delegation stated that only 58 per cent of the population had access to safe drinking water. The Government, with the assistance of the German development bank and the Asian Development Bank, had been investing in the water supply infrastructure to improve access to safe drinking water.

75. The delegation reported on measures taken to control the use of tobacco, improve the provision of services to persons with disabilities and provide social assistance to low-income families. The Government expressed its gratitude to all its partners, including the World Bank, the German development bank, the Government of Japan, the European Union, the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations

Population Fund, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the United States Agency for International Development for providing financial support for projects in the field of social protection and health care.

76. Access to education had been a priority ever since Tajikistan had gained its independence. A number of laws and regulations had been adopted to ensure universal access to education. A plan of action had been developed to prevent children from becoming involved in begging and ensure that they returned to school. The Government provided financial allowances to enable children from orphanages and low-income families to attend school, in particular to pursue higher education. The school attendance rate remained high.

77. The Government had implemented a range of measures to increase the attendance of girls in secondary education. A special quota system had been implemented to ensure access to higher education for young persons from remote and mountainous areas.

78. The Government had introduced special courses into the school curricula that used, among other methods, computer technology to raise awareness on sexual and reproductive health.

79. Tajikistan provided guarantees to ensure that children from ethnic minorities have access to education in their own languages. A long-term plan had been developed to provide schools with teaching materials in minority languages. A concept document on inclusive education had been adopted and the law on education had been revised accordingly to include the principle of inclusive education.

80. Argentina welcomed the adoption of the programme for human rights education and encouraged Tajikistan to advance its measures to ensure religious tolerance and combat all forms of discrimination against members of religious minorities.

81. Armenia noted that the State had started the process of reforming the judiciary and penitentiaries, increased consultations with the non-governmental sector and provided training for law enforcement officers on combating torture. It welcomed the State's preparations to ratify further instruments.

82. Australia encouraged Tajikistan to enable the Ombudsman, namely the Commissioner for Human Rights, to operate as an independent institution with the resources necessary to fulfil his or her mandate in conformity with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles). It commended the adoption of a definition of torture. Australia was concerned about restrictions on freedom of expression.

83. Austria welcomed improvements in the situation of juveniles in detention and the State's efforts to end child labour. It was concerned about the deterioration in the human rights situation over the previous year, in particular the Government's actions targeting the political opposition and the restrictions imposed on media freedom and freedom of expression.

84. Azerbaijan appreciated the efforts of Tajikistan to develop the legislative framework in the field of human rights and the strategies adopted in fields such as social protection, women, youth and health care. It commended the State's efforts to bring its national human rights institution into line with the Paris Principles.

85. Belarus noted with appreciation the State's commitment to developing its national human rights institutions and ensuring that they operated effectively. It commended Tajikistan for adopting a comprehensive approach to issues related to sustainable development and for measures taken to combat trafficking in persons.

86. Belgium commended Tajikistan for welcoming visits by special procedure mandate holders and expressed the hope that a standing invitation would be extended shortly. Belgium reminded Tajikistan of the recommendations it had accepted during the first review to ensure the independence of the body responsible for appointing judges.

87. Canada acknowledged the steps taken to promote gender equality and combat violence against women. It remained concerned about the decision taken by the Supreme Court to ban the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan, which restricted the right to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

88. Chad noted the State's cooperation with the United Nations human rights mechanisms on implementing their recommendations. It noted the legal and practical steps taken to improve the protection and promotion of human rights.

89. China noted the achievements of Tajikistan in the field of poverty reduction, inter alia, and its focus on gender equality. It further noted the 2013 act on the prevention of domestic violence. It called upon the international community to provide the necessary technical and financial assistance to support the development of Tajikistan.

90. Colombia highlighted the State's commitment to advancing the implementation of the recommendations from the first review, in particular the Government's strategy to promote the role of women and the act on the prevention of domestic violence.

91. Costa Rica noted the progress made, including measures to strengthen the role of the Ombudsman, and to combat torture. It was, however, concerned at reports of the persistence of torture and ill-treatment, the low level of representation of women in decision-making positions and the violence used in response to public protests.

92. Cuba highlighted the State's cooperation with international human rights mechanisms, its reform of the judiciary and penitentiaries and its adoption of the act on combating trafficking in persons and providing assistance to victims.

93. The Czech Republic expressed appreciation for the responses provided by Tajikistan to some of its questions and made recommendations.

94. Denmark expressed its hope that Tajikistan would accede to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, despite the fact that it had taken note of recommendations to ratify it during the first universal periodic review.

95. Egypt highlighted the adoption of the amendment to the law on the Commissioner for Human Rights, the adoption of national human rights action plans, the implementation of significant judicial reforms, the expansion of human rights education, the training provided to law enforcement officials and the enhancement of women's participation in public life.

96. France welcomed the delegation of Tajikistan and made recommendations.

97. Georgia noted the efforts of Tajikistan to prevent torture, enhance the role of women and protect the rights of children. Georgia welcomed the State's cooperation with the United Nations human rights mechanisms and encouraged Tajikistan to extend a standing invitation to the special procedure mandate holders.

98. Germany noted some encouraging developments with regard to the prevention of torture, but was of the opinion that Tajikistan had not fully implemented the Convention against Torture. It noted that the Government's promise to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty had not been fulfilled.

99. Ghana welcomed the State's efforts to ratify some of the core international human rights treaties, but was concerned at reports that the use of torture persisted despite the

acceptance by Tajikistan of a recommendation made during the first review to abolish the practice.

100. Guatemala welcomed the creation of a government body to oversee the implementation of the State's human rights obligations and hoped that its functions could be expanded to include improving and monitoring the implementation of recommendations made by the treaty bodies.

101. Honduras applauded the moratorium on the death penalty and expressed the hope that it would serve as a step towards the total abolition of capital punishment. Honduras also expressed the hope that the office of the Commissioner for Human Rights would become an independent and effective body.

102. The Sudan welcomed the cooperation of Tajikistan with various human rights mechanisms. It noted with satisfaction the changes made to improve conditions in the penitentiary system and efforts to fight human trafficking and promote the rights of women.

103. Brazil commended Tajikistan for the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the adoption of the 2013 act on the prevention of domestic violence. However, it regretted the lack of solid mechanisms for their implementation. Brazil encouraged Tajikistan to make further progress in combating torture.

104. Montenegro highlighted the establishment of a children's ombudsman and the efforts made to eliminate forced child labour. It noted the concerns expressed by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women about domestic violence and enquired about the efforts to provide medical care and protection for victims.

105. The delegation of Tajikistan reported that the code of administrative procedure had been amended in 2013 to include provisions on the prevention of domestic violence. The Criminal Code established liability for a number of crimes related to domestic violence. A network of inspectors operated throughout Tajikistan to prevent domestic violence. Several crisis and resource centres, as well as temporary shelters, also existed in the country. A special data collection system had been introduced to collect statistics on cases of domestic violence.

106. A special department had been established to coordinate the implementation of the recommendations made by the United Nations human rights bodies. Additionally, focal points had been appointed in all ministries and State agencies, as well as in local government bodies, to implement those recommendations.

107. The right to freedom of religion and belief was guaranteed to everyone regardless of ethnicity, race or language, in accordance with the human rights principles enshrined in the Constitution and in other domestic legislation. During the previous four years, more than 300 religious groups had been registered. The registration of religious groups was not a precondition for the recognition of and respect for different beliefs and religions. It was used mainly to provide them with legal status. A religious group could be banned by a court decision if the organization violated legal requirements.

108. The delegation explained that some restrictions on women's freedom of expression and religion, such as the fatwa against women attending or praying in mosques, were enforced by religious organizations and that the Government was therefore unable to interfere.

109. The delegation explained that existing legal restrictions on religious education were aimed at preventing the recruitment of young persons by religious terrorist organizations. Legal provisions had been introduced requiring persons planning to study in a religious educational institution outside of the country to provide the necessary documents to prove

that the institution concerned conformed to international standards. Religious education must comply with domestic legal provisions prohibiting incitement to hatred.

110. A new law on mass media had been adopted in 2013 to ensure the independence of the media and to bring legislation into line with international human rights standards. Any violation of the freedom of the media by State officials was subject to criminal liability. Every person was guaranteed the right to seek and receive information through the media on the activities of State officials and bodies. State officials and civil servants were obliged to respond to requests for information from citizens within three days. The blocking of websites containing materials promoting extremist and terrorism was carried out in line with the legal provisions in force. The new amendments to the law on counter-terrorism permitted the temporary suspension of electronic communication in cases involving ongoing counter-terrorism operations.

111. The delegation clarified that the new law on advocacy and the Bar did not provide the Ministry of Justice with any administrative functions with regard to the access of lawyers to the Bar or any authority to intervene in the work of the Bar.

112. Tax inspections were carried out in public organizations and a large number of tax evasion cases had been identified. Nevertheless, the delegation commented that those tax inspections should not been seen as an attempt to restrict the freedom of association.

113. The Government had carried out a feasibility analysis with regard to the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in cooperation with non-governmental and international organizations. The delegation stated that Tajikistan was ready to ratify the Convention.

114. In conclusion, the delegation reiterated the commitment of Tajikistan to the universal periodic review process. The Government would study carefully all the recommendations and would begin its follow-up of those recommendations, in order to report on the progress achieved.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations**

115. The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue and listed below have been examined by Tajikistan and enjoy the support of Tajikistan:

115.1 Ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Togo) (Montenegro) (Uruguay) (Senegal) (Slovenia) (Guatemala) (Sierra Leone);

115.2 Consider ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Philippines);

115.3 Become a State party of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Slovakia);

115.4 Finalize and take necessary steps to access the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Islamic Republic of Iran);

115.5 Consider the accession to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Indonesia);

115.6 Proceed towards finalizing the ratification process of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Egypt);

** The conclusions and recommendations have not been edited.

115.7 **Finalize the study and consideration to become a State party to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, provide adequate social protection for persons with grave disabilities, and improve opportunities for socioeconomic advancement of persons with disabilities (Malaysia);**

115.8 **Ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as soon as possible (Ghana);**

115.9 **Sign and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Turkey);**

115.10 **Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Montenegro);**

115.11 **Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Slovenia) (Paraguay);**

115.12 **Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Uruguay);**

115.13 **Continue the work to bringing the national legislation in line with the international commitments (Kyrgyzstan);**

115.14 **Continue the on-going process of the exchange of views and experiences with other countries with respect to the improvement of national legislation in the field of human rights (Cuba);**

115.15 **Continue the efforts undertaken to strengthen the role of the national human rights institutions, in particular the Government Commission for Human Rights (Morocco);**

115.16 **Strengthen the national mechanisms to improve the protection of the rights of children (Kuwait);**

115.17 **Take all the necessary measures to ensure that the national human rights institution is in full compliance with the Paris Principles (Portugal);**

115.18 **Establish an institution for the promotion and protection of human rights, in conformity with the Paris Principles (Chad);**

115.19 **Ensure that the Human Rights Ombudsman is an independent institution and receives the necessary resources to fulfil its mandate in accordance with the Paris Principles (Uruguay);**

115.20 **Continue to take steps to ensure that the national human rights institution is in conformity with the Paris Principles (Egypt);**

115.21 **Strengthen further the capacity of the Office of the Commissioner on Human Rights in order to ensure its compliance with the Paris Principles (Niger);**

115.22 **Ensure that the Human Rights Ombudsman is an independent institution which functions in full compliance with the Paris Principles (Poland);**

115.23 **Continue reinforcing the mandate of the Commission on Implementation of international obligations in the field of human rights (State of Palestine);**

115.24 **Give continuity to strengthening of national human rights institutions and mechanisms to further promote and protect human rights in the country (Nepal);**

115.25 **Use a national mechanism for social security needs of the most vulnerable groups (Turkmenistan);**

115.26 **Strengthen the national capacity to implement the human rights action plans in accordance with international obligations (Sudan);**

115.27 **Promote the effective protection of children's rights in different relevant areas (Islamic Republic of Iran);**

115.28 **Continue to strengthen measures to improve access to justice and education to women and girls in rural areas (United Arab Emirates);**

115.29 **Take practical steps to strengthen the implementation of measures promoting the rights of women and children and eliminating violence against them (Australia);**

115.30 **Continue reviewing policies for effective implementation of women and child rights (Pakistan);**

115.31 **Step up efforts to create favourable work conditions for women, youth and persons with disabilities (Kyrgyzstan);**

115.32 **Take further steps in consolidating the cooperation with the national civil society organisations in implementation of programmes aimed at promotion and protection of Human Rights (Armenia);**

115.33 **Strengthen cooperation with human rights mechanisms in order to continue to harmonize national legislation with the international standards (Morocco);**

115.34 **Submit overdue reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (Ukraine);**

115.35 **Continue constructive cooperation with the United Nations human rights mechanisms (Azerbaijan);**

115.36 **Implement effectively the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, in particular by addressing deep-rooted stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society (Lithuania);**

115.37 **Take all necessary measures to fight against discrimination and violence against women and to accept individual complaints procedure relating to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (France);**

115.38 **Continue strengthening policies to promote gender equality and empowerment of women (Georgia);**

115.39 **Continue its efforts to eliminate the stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society (State of Palestine);**

115.40 **Take steps to end stereotypes and discriminatory behaviours against women and redress wage inequalities between men and women (Togo);**

115.41 **Promote greater representation of women in professional education, in decision-making positions in Government and in Parliament (Mexico);**

115.42 **Adopt legislation and policies to promote greater participation of women in political life and representative bodies (Costa Rica);**

115.43 **Adopt measures to eradicate gender discrimination in society, in the family and in the labour market (Honduras);**

115.44 **Adopt concrete measures to tackle structural inequalities, occupational segregation, the gender pay gap, and to ensure equal opportunities for women in all spheres of life (Slovenia);**

115.45 **Take measures to combat the stigmatization and discrimination associated with people living with tuberculosis and HIV as well as persons living with mental illness (Colombia);**

115.46 **Fully abolish the death penalty (Italy);**

115.47 **Fully abolish the death penalty, without delay (Lithuania);**

115.48 **Completely abolish the death penalty (Slovakia);**

115.49 **Abolish the death penalty (Costa Rica);**

115.50 **Eliminate the death penalty in all circumstances (Honduras);**

115.51 **Following the moratorium in force since 2004, undertake further measures to fully abolish the death penalty (Georgia);**

115.52 **Formally abolish the death penalty for all cases and under all circumstances, as well as ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Portugal);**

115.53 **Abolish the death penalty and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (France);**

115.54 **Abolish the death penalty in law and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights(Australia);**

115.55 **Proceed to a de jure abolition of the death penalty and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Belgium);**

115.56 **Establish the abolition of the death penalty through the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Spain);**

115.57 **Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and abolish the death penalty without delay (Germany);**

115.58 **Strengthen practical efforts to eliminate torture (Australia);**

115.59 **Take measures to render its criminal law consistent with the prohibition of torture which constitutes a norm of international law (Honduras);**

115.60 **Conduct effective awareness raising activities to combat torture (Kyrgyzstan);**

115.61 **Implement the recommendations of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on torture and meaningfully investigate all allegations of torture (Slovakia);**

115.62 **Take immediate and concrete steps to fulfil the recommendations made by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on torture in 2012 and 2014, including the establishment of an effective national preventative mechanism (Canada);**

115.63 **Carry out awareness raising campaigns for the prevention of domestic violence, particularly against women and girls (Mexico);**

115.64 **Initiate awareness raising and training campaigns so that law enforcement officials, medical personnel and jurists learn how to provide proper care to survivors of gender violence (Spain);**

115.65 **Establish a mechanism for the implementation of the law on domestic violence and its associate Programme 2014-2023 (Lithuania);**

115.66 **Implement and enforce the domestic violence law of 2013 as well as strengthen the protection and promotion of women's rights through legislative and policy measures and by addressing social and cultural attitudes and practices (Norway);**

115.67 **Expedite the creation of a robust mechanism that will implement the 2013 law on domestic violence and its associated Programme for 2014-2023 (Republic of Korea);**

115.68 **Strengthen measures to combat violence against women, including through the assessment of the implementation of the Domestic Violence Prevention Act and its related Programme, and consider seeking international cooperation on this matter (Brazil);**

115.69 **Train the health care personnel to screen and document instances of domestic violence (Lithuania);**

115.70 **Take definitive measures to end child marriages (Maldives);**

115.71 **Continue to combat violence against children (Turkmenistan);**

115.72 **Combat and eliminate the worst forms of child labour, and raise the minimum age for hazardous work to 18 (Sierra Leone);**

115.73 **Establish a legal framework to fight against forced labour and to ban child labour (Sudan);**

115.74 **Implement the National Programme for 2015-2020 to Eradicate the Worst Forms of Child Labour (Cuba);**

115.75 **Enforce the prohibition of all corporal punishment of children in all settings, including in the domestic sphere and in care settings (Sweden);**

115.76 **Conduct regular monitoring of the situation related to trafficking in persons to effectively combat it (Belarus);**

115.77 **Continue with its positive steps to curb illicit drug trafficking (Pakistan);**

115.78 **Ensure the full independence of the judiciary (Poland);**

115.79 **Continue taking further steps for the strengthening of judicial system (Azerbaijan);**

115.80 **Continue the programmes to reform the judicial sector and penitentiary facilities (Sudan);**

115.81 **Take necessary measures to ensure the right to fair trial (Turkey);**

115.82 **Further strengthen the capacities of its prisons with a view to improving the custody conditions of detainees (Kazakhstan);**

115.83 **Continue the work to monitor and evaluate the penitentiary institutions (Kuwait);**

115.84 **Ensure that prompt, thorough and impartial investigations are carried out into all deaths in custody as well as all allegations of torture and ill-treatment (Denmark);**

115.85 **Conduct mandatory human rights training for law enforcement agencies, including training on hate crimes (Slovenia);**

115.86 **Maintain its effective protection of the family as the natural and fundamental unit of the society (Egypt);**

115.87 **Continue to implement programmes and policies aimed at strengthening inter-religious dialogue and fostering tolerance and understanding (Singapore);**

115.88 **Initiate a process of consultations with civil society to study how to reform the 2015 law on public associations to favour freedom of association, in line with international human rights norms (Spain);**

115.89 **Strengthen the mechanisms to ensure the safe and independent participation of civil society organizations in human rights discussions in the country and in their cooperation with the various United Nations mechanisms (Mexico);**

115.90 **Explore all the ways for enabling the development of a pluralistic society in a peaceful environment (Turkey);**

115.91 **Continue its efforts aimed at realizing the right to work for all with a specific focus on young people (Egypt);**

115.92 **Continue to formulate the next round of the national strategies for poverty reduction and development (China);**

115.93 **Continue to consolidate its successful measures towards the further advancing of its goal of reducing poverty by 20 per cent by 2020 (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);**

115.94 **Continue its excellent programs and social policies with the aim of further increasing the quality of life of its people, particularly the most vulnerable sectors of the population (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);**

115.95 **Continue implement the national strategy to improve the well-being of the population (Belarus);**

115.96 **Ensure access to clean drinking water is provided to the whole population (Maldives);**

115.97 **Improve the population's access to safe drinking water (Algeria);**

115.98 **Adopt a comprehensive mental health policy and plan of action based on a human rights approach (Brazil);**

115.99 **Continue to tackle the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs. In this vein, make complementary efforts to strengthen the existing legal and regulatory mechanism and better engagement of National Drug Control Agency with regional and international relevant institutions (Islamic Republic of Iran);**

115.100 Incorporate a human rights perspective in its legal and regulatory framework on combatting substance abuse and undertake transparent narcotic law enforcement, active campaign against drug use to the public, and rehabilitation programmes (Malaysia);

115.101 Improve the quality, availability and accessibility of primary health-care services, to reduce high rates of infant and maternal mortality (Maldives);

115.102 Allocate resources to promote universal access to HIV prevention and treatment in state and NGO-run health-diagnostic facilities without fear of stigma and discrimination (Netherlands);

115.103 Strengthen sexual and reproductive health education, as recommended by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Slovenia);

115.104 Continue the efforts made in enhancing the right to education particularly education of children (Iraq);

115.105 Attach further importance to the culture of human rights through the educational and mass media institutions (Iraq);

115.106 Implement effectively measures to assist girls and children from low-income families to have access to quality education (Lao People's Democratic Republic);

115.107 Strengthen the efforts towards upgrading the facilities and capacity for quality education for all children, including special education, and improve the access to education for children living in remote areas (Malaysia);

115.108 Strengthen the national mechanisms for the access to appropriate education, including in rural regions (Belarus);

115.109 Continue the promotion of education in the field of human rights and dissemination of knowledge among the public about the international human rights standards (Turkmenistan);

115.110 Implement programmes of human rights education for state bodies, especially law enforcement officials (Colombia);

115.111 Implement educational programs aimed at raising awareness of the past genocides and of prevention of this crime (Armenia);

115.112 Continue to promote inclusive education for children with disabilities (India);

115.113 Promote the rights of disabled people, inter alia, through the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities (Algeria);

115.114 Take measures to ensure that persons with disabilities are recognized as a vulnerable group and can enjoy their economic, cultural and social rights (Honduras);

115.115 Take necessary steps to effectively implement the existing mechanism for the reintegration of returned migrant workers in the national economy (Kazakhstan);

115.116 Continue to draft development strategies, which Tajikistan intends to do in order to improve the standard of living (Sudan);

115.117 **Further invest in the medical and educational fields to promote comprehensive economic and social development (China).**

116. **The following enjoy the support of Tajikistan, which considers that they are already implemented:**

116.1 **Consider acceding to the Convention against Torture (Honduras);**

116.2 **Consider ratifying the International Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Philippines).**

117. **The recommendations below did not enjoy the support of Tajikistan and would thus be noted:**

117.1 **Become a State party of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Slovakia);**

117.2 **Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Senegal) (France) (Sierra Leone) (Paraguay);**

117.3 **Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance as soon as possible (Ghana);**

117.4 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Denmark) (Italy) (Senegal) (Costa Rica) (Slovenia) (Guatemala) (Paraguay) (Uruguay) (Portugal) (Norway);**

117.5 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture as soon as possible (Ghana);**

117.6 **Sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Turkey) (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**

117.7 **Consider ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and ensure effective implementation of national mechanisms in the area of identification and prevention of torture (Kazakhstan);**

117.8 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and establish a national preventive mechanism accordingly, and ensure that prompt, thorough and impartial investigations are carried out into all allegations of torture (Czech Republic);**

117.9 **Systematically implement the Convention against Torture; ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture; and set up an effective National Preventive Mechanism as soon as possible (Germany);**

117.10 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and establish an effective National Preventive Mechanism. In the meantime, unimpeded access to all places of detention should be granted to independent civil society organisations working to prevent torture in Tajikistan (Sweden);**

117.11 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and establish a strong and independent national preventive mechanism (Switzerland);**

117.12 **Consider accession to the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court (Latvia);**

117.13 **Become a State party of the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court (Slovakia);**

117.14 Adhere to the main international instruments on human rights to which it is not a party, in particular the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Argentina).

118. The following recommendations will be examined by Tajikistan, which will provide responses in due time, but no later than the thirty-third session of the Human Rights Council in September 2016:

118.1 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Senegal) (Slovenia);

118.2 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as soon as possible (Ghana);

118.3 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Portugal);

118.4 Become a State party of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Slovakia);

118.5 Consider ratifying International Labour Organization Convention No. 189 (Philippines);

118.6 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Portugal);

118.7 Proceed with early conclusion of major international human rights treaties, including the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Japan);

118.8 Continue work aimed at ratification of international instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Ukraine);

118.9 Ratify international human rights treaties: the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty; the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Poland);

118.10 Engage in bringing Tajikistan's legislation in line with the country's international and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe commitments to protect freedom of religion (Austria);

118.11 Develop and implement a National Action Plan for Human Rights to further ensure systematic and comprehensive approach for the promotion and protection of human rights, with the full engagement of the civil society (Indonesia);

118.12 Consider the adoption of a comprehensive national human rights action plan by involving civil society (State of Palestine);

118.13 Put in place a comprehensive national human rights action plan, in cooperation with civil society (Slovenia);

118.14 Strengthen national coordination mechanisms and develop a comprehensive national human rights action plan, as recommended by the United Nations Secretary General in 2015, before Tajikistan's next Universal Periodic Review (Canada);

118.15 Issue a standing invitation to the United Nations special procedures (Lithuania);

118.16 Issue a standing invitation to all the special procedure mandate holders (Republic of Korea);

118.17 Issue a standing invitation to special procedures, giving priority to the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders (Uruguay);

118.18 Extend a standing invitation to the Human Rights Council's Special Procedures (Portugal);

118.19 Extend a standing invitation to all special procedure mandate holders of the Human Rights Council, as previously recommended (Latvia);

118.20 Consider issuing a standing invitation to special procedures (Turkey) (Ukraine);

118.21 Adopt a comprehensive anti-discrimination law, providing a definition of direct and indirect discrimination (Italy);

118.22 Reinforce the legal framework for the prevention of discrimination and violence against women (Italy);

118.23 Bring all provisions concerning racial discrimination into full compliance with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Guatemala);

118.24 Eliminate discrimination affecting freedom of religion (Honduras);

118.25 Urgently address the alleged systematic acts of torture and ill-treatment of persons in detention, and also ensure that all perpetrators are brought to justice (Ghana);

118.26 Take all necessary measures to effectively fight against torture and ill-treatment, particularly in places of detention, by creating an independent national preventive mechanism and ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (France);

118.27 Continue its efforts to end violence against women, including through enacting preventive legislation, as well as through providing rehabilitative services to victims (Singapore);

118.28 Criminalize domestic violence, and facilitate access to legal remedies for victims of such violence (Paraguay);

118.29 Criminalize gender-based violence in all its forms, including the psychological ones (Spain);

118.30 Introduce a specific article on domestic violence in the framework of the forthcoming reform of the criminal code (Switzerland);

118.31 Criminalize domestic violence, create conditions in which victims do not fear to report cases of domestic violence, and increase the number of shelters available for victims (Czech Republic);

118.32 Include domestic violence as a specific crime in the criminal code (Sweden);

118.33 Establish procedures and allocate resources to identify victims of trafficking in persons and provide appropriate services for them (Paraguay);

118.34 Take further measures to prevent trafficking in persons, in investigating and prosecuting offenders, and provide effective support and redress to victims (United Arab Emirates);

118.35 Take all necessary measures to strengthen the independence of the judiciary and respect for the right to a fair trial, including as part of the ongoing trial against the leaders of the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (France);

118.36 Introduce measures to ensure the free, fair and open conduct of trials in accordance with international standards including access to Legal Counsel in pre-trial custody (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);

118.37 Ensure that detainees are afforded fundamental legal and procedural safeguards from the outset of their deprivation of liberty, and establish an independent National Preventive Mechanism in compliance with the requirements of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Norway);

118.38 Ensure lawyers freedom to exercise their professional duties by guaranteeing unhindered access to their clients, freedom to represent their clients without threats from state or other actors and that such threats are promptly investigated (Norway);

118.39 Refrain from and prevent any executive interference with lawyers' conduct of their professional duties (Austria);

118.40 Make the necessary amendments to the law on "Advokatura" of 2015 in order to remove any obstacle to the independence of the profession of a lawyer, in parallel with actions promoting the independence of judges (Belgium);

118.41 Grant missions sent by the International Committee of the Red Cross full access to prisons and detention centers for independent monitoring (Germany);

118.42 Ensure the freedom of expression, association, assembly and freedom of religion in accordance with international human rights norms (Slovakia);

118.43 Ensure freedom of expression, of assembly and of association in accordance with its international obligations and do not interfere with civil society organizations and their activities by excessive regulations which are formulated ambiguously (Switzerland);

118.44 Respect freedom of expression, assembly and association, in particular by not prosecuting people on the sole grounds of their membership of a political movement, and by implementing the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression following his visit (France);

118.45 Guarantee freedom of religion or belief and eliminate all forms of discrimination against people belonging to religious minorities, in particular in the field of religious education (Poland);

118.46 **In the interest of religious tolerance, lift the bans on religious groups to enable them to practise their religions freely (Sierra Leone);**

118.47 **Take the measures necessary to eliminate restrictions on freedom of worship, including the possibility of exercising the right to conscientious objection to compulsory military service (Argentina);**

118.48 **Amend the Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations to fully protect the right to freedom of religion or belief in compliance with international norms and obligations. Remove restrictions imposed over religious education and literature, activities of religious organizations, and religious dress to promote religious tolerance (Canada);**

118.49 **Abolish all limitations with respect to freedom of religion and expression (Turkey);**

118.50 **Ensure the exercise of the right to freedom of expression, including through access to Internet sites and social networks without undue restrictions (Colombia);**

118.51 **Redouble its efforts to create an environment that ensures freedom of expression for journalists and media, including by revising the 2013 law and the 2015 governmental regulation on media, towards encouraging a free and active press (Republic of Korea);**

118.52 **Ensure that journalists and other individuals be able to freely exercise the right to freedom of expression and have access to Internet without undue restrictions (Lithuania);**

118.53 **Respect freedom of the media and ensure the safety of journalists (France);**

118.54 **Rescind undue restrictions on the media and access to information, including on the internet, and tolerate all forms of legitimate speech, including criticism of the government and its policies (Austria);**

118.55 **Remove undue restrictions on use of Internet and ensure that journalists can freely exercise their right to freedom of expression (Japan);**

118.56 **Repeal legislation that facilitates the blockage of Internet content and telecommunications (United States of America);**

118.57 **Review its legislation and policies in order to create a free, safe and enabling environment for journalists, bloggers and others to exercise fully their right to freedom of expression (Czech Republic);**

118.58 **Prevent arbitrary and extrajudicial blocking of websites and ensure that national security concerns are not invoked to stifle peaceful dissent and criticism of the Government or to restrict the right to freedom of religion or belief (Czech Republic);**

118.59 **Ensure that suspension of media outlets, including online media, cannot occur without judicial procedures on the basis of strict necessity and proportionality (Netherlands);**

118.60 **Decriminalize defamation (Lithuania);**

118.61 **Bring its law on public associations into line with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and also as recommended by the Human Rights Committee, reinstate NGOs, which were unlawfully shut down, and**

refrain from imposing discriminatory restrictions on the freedom of association (Lithuania);

118.62 **Amend the Law on Public Association to ensure consistency with international human rights norms (Australia);**

118.63 **Review the Law on Public Associations and all relevant policies in order to eliminate inappropriate restrictions on the right to freedom of association and ensure that all civil society organizations, including those with foreign funding, can work free from undue administrative obstacles or harassment (Czech Republic);**

118.64 **Harmonize the Law on Public Assembly with international standards (Costa Rica);**

118.65 **Take the necessary measures so as to ensure that journalists and human rights defenders can do their work independently and without fear of reprisals from the authorities, be they of financial, legal or of another nature (Belgium);**

118.66 **Cease the harassment and persecution of human rights defenders and civil society organizations, including by ensuring that the implementing regulations for amendments to the Law on Public Associations are not used to harass NGOs through surprise inspections, onerous information requests, and other inhibiting tactics (United States of America);**

118.67 **Provide human rights defenders, including defence attorneys and political figures detained as a result of their political activities, such as Burzurgmehr Yorov, Shuhrat Qudratov, and Ishoq Tabarov and his sons, with fair open, and transparent trials, including the substantive protections and procedural guarantees in accordance with Tajikistan's international obligations (United States of America);**

118.68 **Take measures in order to ensure that freedom of assembly and association can be exercised in line with international obligations and refrain from imposing restrictions on civil society and human rights defenders (Poland);**

118.69 **Immediately and unconditionally release prisoners arrested on politically motivated charges, including members of the Islamic Renaissance party of Tajikistan, Group 24 and their lawyers (Norway);**

118.70 **Allow peaceful opposition groups and parties to operate freely and exercise their rights to freedom of assembly, association, expression, and religion in accordance with international human rights norms (Austria).**

119. **All conclusions and/or recommendations contained in the present report reflect the position of the submitting State(s) and/or the State under review. They should not be construed as endorsed by the Working Group as a whole.**

Annex

Composition of the delegation

The delegation of Tajikistan was headed by the Minister of Justice of Tajikistan, Mr. Rustam Shohmurod and composed of the following members:

- Mr. Yusuf Rakhmon, Prosecutor General
- Ms. Sumangul Tagoizoda, Minister of Labour, Migration and Employment
- Mr. Jamshed Khamidov, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva
- Mr. Rahmatullo Mirboboev, First Deputy Minister of Education and Science
- Ms. Saida Umarzoda, First Vice-Minister of Health and Social Affairs
- Mr. Sharaf Karimzoda, the Deputy Head of Division on Human Rights Guarantees under Executive Office of the President of Tajikistan.